

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Currently, claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Claim 20 has been withdrawn from consideration.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. '175) in view of Bokhour (U.S. '333). Applicant traverses this rejection.

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, all of the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. The combination of Suzuki and Bokhour fails to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. For example, the combination fails to teach or suggest “detecting an outline portion of an image as an outline area, with respect to an area other than the ink line area and the neighboring area in the original image, by performing an outline extraction process for the entire area of the original image except the ink line area and the neighboring area thereof to prevent the ink line area from becoming thickened in a line drawing image obtained from the outline extraction process,” as required by independent claim 1 and its dependents. Independent claims 6 and 11 and their respective dependents require similar (but not necessarily identical) limitations. The combination also fails to teach or suggest “detecting an outline area of the original image, the outline area being outside of the ink line area and the neighboring area and having a brightness which differs from an area adjacent to

the outline area, by performing an outline extraction process for the entire area of the original image except the ink line area and the neighboring area thereof to prevent the ink line area from becoming thickened in a line drawing image obtained from the outline extraction process,” as required by independent claim 12 and its dependents. Independent claim 16 and its dependents require similar (but not necessarily identical) limitations.

Page 7 of the Office Action makes reference to a “new ground(s) of rejection.” However, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of Suzuki and Bochour appears to be the same rejection made in previous Office Actions.

Page 2 of the Advisory Action dated August 19, 2005 makes note that “Applicant argues ‘neither Suzuki or Bochour appreciates the benefit of preventing an ink line area from becoming thickened on page 3.’ Examiner again fails to see said limitations as being claimed through said claims.”

Consistent with the Examiner’s helpful comments in the Advisory Action (e.g., “Examiner would suggest incorporation of said limitations in said claims.”), independent claim 1 now recites “detecting an outline portion of an image as an outline area, with respect to an area other than the ink line area and the neighboring area in the original image, by performing an outline extraction process for the entire area of the original image except the ink line area and the neighboring area thereof to prevent the ink line area from becoming thickened in a line drawing image obtained from the outline extraction process (emphasis added).” Similar (but not necessarily identical) comments apply to the other

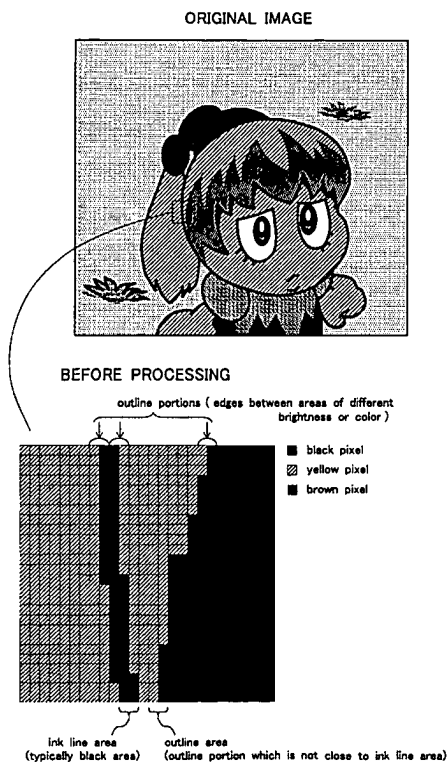
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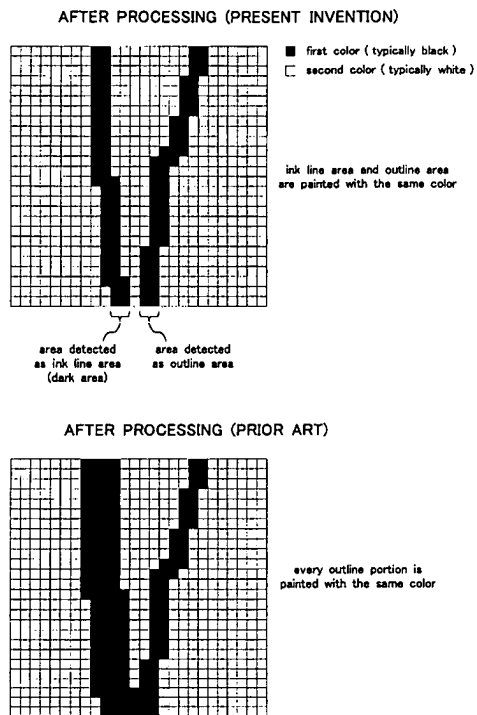
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independent claims. Applicant submits that the combination of Suzuki and Bokhour fails to teach or suggest these limitations.

In order to facilitate an understanding of the present invention, Applicant has provided below the following figures which graphically describes the present invention and contrasts the present invention with the “prior art” described in the “Description of Background Art” section of the application (pages 1-2 of the application). As will be appreciated from the following figures, the “ink line area” in the present invention is prevented from being thickened. (Contrast the figures below labeled “After Processing (Present Invention)” and “After Processing (Prior Art)”).



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Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

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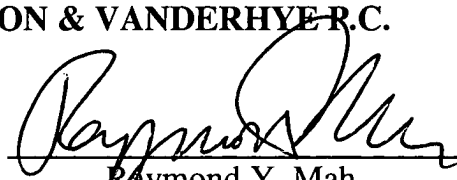
Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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